

**Celebrating the Life of
Linda Ann (Tapp) Merrill
February 1, 1949 – February 17, 2021**



**Saturday, February 20, 2021
2:00 pm**

**Zion Lutheran Church, ELCA
530 Sixth Street
International Falls, Minnesota 56649
218/283-9865**

PRELUDE

OBITUARY

Todd Merrill

EULOGY

Nancy Penn and Susan Foran

WELCOME AND THANKSGIVING FOR BAPTISM

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the source of all mercy and the God of all consolation, who comforts us in all our sorrows so that we can comfort others in their sorrows with the consolation we ourselves have received from God.

When we were baptized in Christ Jesus, we were baptized into his death. We were buried, therefore, with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live a new life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

Eternal God, maker of heaven and earth, who formed us from the dust of the earth, who by your breath gave us life, we glorify you. **We glorify you.**

Jesus Christ, the resurrection and the life, who suffered death for all humanity, who rose from the grave to open the way to eternal life, we praise you. **We praise you.**

Holy Spirit, author and giver of life, the comforter of all who suffer, our sure confidence and everlasting hope, we worship you. **We worship you.**

To you, O blessed Trinity, be glory and honor, forever and ever. **Amen.**

MUSICAL SELECTION – *Amazing Grace*

- 1 Amazing grace! how sweet the sound
that saved a wretch like me!
I once was lost, but now am found;
was blind, but now I see.

- 2 'Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
and grace my fears relieved;
how precious did that grace appear
the hour I first believed!

- 3 Through many dangers, toils, and snares
I have already come;
'tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
and grace will lead me home.
- 4 The Lord has promised good to me;
his word my hope secures;
he will my shield and portion be
as long as life endures.
- 5 When we've been there ten thousand years,
bright shining as the sun,
we've no less days to sing God's praise
than when we'd first begun.

GREETING

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

PRAYER

Almighty God of mercy and amazing grace, we remember before you today your servant, Linda, who has finished her course in faith and now rests from her labors. We thank you for giving her to us to know and to love as a companion in our pilgrimage on earth.

In your boundless compassion, console us who mourn. Give us faith to see that death has been swallowed up in the victory of our Lord Jesus Christ, so that we may live in confidence and hope until, by your call, we are gathered to our heavenly home in the company of all your saints; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**

SCRIPTURE

MESSAGE

Pastor Mark Peters

MUSICAL SELECTION – *On Eagle's Wings*

- 1 You who dwell in the shelter of the Lord,
who abide in this shadow for life,
say to the Lord: "My refuge,
my rock in whom I trust!"

Refrain

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of his hand.

- 2 The snare of the fowler will never capture you,
and famine will bring you no fear;
under God's wings your refuge,
with faithfulness your shield. *Refrain*

- 3 You need not fear the terror of the night,
nor the arrow that flies by day;
though thousands fall about you,
near you it shall not come. *Refrain*

- 4 For to the angels God's given a command
to guard you in all of your ways;
upon their hands they will bear you up,
lest you dash your foot against a stone.

Final refrain

And he will raise you up on eagle's wings,
bear you on the breath of dawn,
make you to shine like the sun,
and hold you in the palm of his hand;
and hold you, hold you in the palm of his hand.

CREED

Along with the church, we confess our faith.

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF INTERCESSION

Let us pray. Almighty God, you have knit your chosen people together in one communion, in the mystical body of your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Give to your whole Church in heaven and on earth your light and your peace.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant that all who have been baptized into Christ's death and resurrection may die to sin and rise to newness of life and that through the grave and gate of death we may pass with him to our joyful resurrection.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant to us who are still on our pilgrimage, and who walk as yet by faith, that your Holy Spirit may lead us in holiness and righteousness all our days.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant to all who mourn a sure confidence in your loving care, that, casting all their sorrow on you, they may know the consolation of your love.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Give courage and faith to those who are bereaved, that they may have strength to meet the days ahead in the comfort of the holy and certain hope, and in the joyful expectation of eternal life with those they love.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Help us, we pray, in the midst of things we cannot understand, to believe and to trust in the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, and the resurrection of the life everlasting.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Grant us grace to entrust Linda to your never-failing love which sustained her in this life. Receive her into the arms of your mercy, and remember her according to the favor you bear for your people.

Lord, in your mercy, **hear our prayer.**

Into your hands, O Lord, we commend all for whom we pray.
Amen.

LORD'S PRAYER

Lord, remember us in your kingdom and teach us to pray.

Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name,

thy kingdom come,

thy will be done,

on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread;

and forgive us our trespasses,

as we forgive those

who trespass against us;

and lead us not into temptation,

but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom,

and the power, and the glory,

forever and ever. Amen.

COMMENDATION

Let us commend Linda to the mercy of God, our maker and redeemer.

Into your hands, O merciful Savior, we commend your servant Linda. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech you, a sheep of your own fold, a lamb of your own flock, a sinner of your own redeeming.

Receive her into the arms of your mercy, into the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. **Amen.**

MUSICAL SELECTION – *Going Home*

Going home, going home
I'm just going home
Quiet light, some still day
I'm just going home

It's not far, just close by
Through an open door
Work all done, care laid by
Going to fear no more

Mother's there expecting me
Father's waiting, too
Lots of folk gathered there
All the friends I knew.
All the friends I knew.

Home, home, I'm going home!

Nothing lost, all is gain,
No more fret more pain,
No more stumbling on the way,
No more longing for the day,
Going to roam no more!

Morning star lights the way,
Restless dream all done;
Shadows gone, break of day,
Real life just begun.

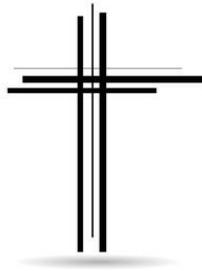
There's no break, there's no end,
Just a living on,
Wide awake with a smile
Going on and on.

Going home, going home,
I'm just going home;
It's not far, just close by,
Through an open door. I'm just going home. Going home.

DISMISSAL

Let us go forth in peace, in the name of Christ. **Amen.**

POSTLUDE



PARTICIPANTS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

Officiant

Pastor Mark Peters

Musician

Joe Belanger

Live Streaming

Ted Saxton (Small Town Tech)

Web Site – www.zionluthernintlfalls.org

Email – zionlutheranifalls@gmail.com

OBITUARY – Linda Ann (Tapp) Merrill

Linda Ann Merrill died peacefully at her International Falls' home, on Ash Wednesday, February 17, 2021, at the age of 72. She was surrounded by those she loved most; her loving husband, her sons and their families.

Linda married her high school sweetheart, Ward Kimberly Merrill, on August 21, 1970 at St. Paul Park MN.

Linda's most loved attribute was that she saw everyone; she cared for everyone, even those that are sometimes invisible to others. For 22 years, Linda guided special education students as an elementary paraprofessional for Bemidji Public Schools. Linda also chose to make a difference as the senior group home manager for Home Front Care of Bemidji MN.

Linda believed in her special education students and celebrated them for the truly 'special' people they were. She encouraged their dreams and held them close to her heart. She also went the extra mile to enrich their classroom life. Linda used her many talents to transform her classroom into a fairy land castle; it was complete with stone walls, an amazing drawbridge, a moat and even a kind knight in armor. Linda willed her classroom chair to magically morph into her throne; a throne fit for the Queen she had become.

With ongoing donations, Linda's castle continued to grow and quickly became the go-to spot for other classrooms to request their sitting for a book read by 'Queen Linda'. Linda was loved and readily recognized in town as the 'Queen'. Once she was even recognized at the Minnesota State Fair; of course with the magic of the fair, she was introduced to the parents, as the 'Castle Queen'.

After retirement, and moving to International Falls, Linda immersed herself in her new community. Early on, she volunteered at the International Falls Bass Championship Tournament.

She joined and supported several nonprofits, including: KOOTASCA's 'Circles of Support' Ally mentoring program; her church, Zion Lutheran Church as council secretary; Servants of Shelter board of directors; and volunteered literally hundreds of hours at Backus Community Center. Even when Linda was suffering from worsening symptoms of her pancreatic cancer, she continued to deliver Community Café meals during the pandemic, and actively supported the "Feed Just One" Café by personally raising over \$1,400 in donations. She raised the money from her relatives and friends; she lovingly referred to these important people in her life as, "my people".

Linda loved to host relatives, friends, including their Canadian neighbors at the family's island cabin on Lake Despair ONT. Linda and Ward enjoyed everything the area offered, including house boating and sailing on Rainy Lake, picnics and visits to local and national landmarks. They loved to travel together, with many winter trips to warm up in Cozumel MX. Most recently their destinations were Medora ND, New Orleans LA, Palm Springs and other locations in California.

Linda was preceded in death by her parents, James Fredrick and Mary Darling Tapp, and by Ward's parents, Jim and Deloris Merrill, formerly of International Falls.

Linda is survived by Ward, her husband of 50 years; son Brian James (Rachael) Merrill and grandchildren Ethan James and Adison Ann of Hines MN; and son Scott Kendall (Karen) Merrill and grandchildren Kendall Rudy, Lily Rae and Miles Joseph of Arbor Vitae WI. She is also survived by siblings Mary Sandra Herges (Marvin, deceased) of Forest Lake MN; James Tapp (Linda Mae) of St Paul MN; John Tapp (Linda Kay) of Greer SC; and Joseph Tapp (Cindy) of Woodbury MN; and by her brother-in-law, Todd Kendall (Selina) Merrill of Canyon Country CA; and Rosemary Merrill (Reed, deceased). Linda is also loved and survived by her nieces, nephews, aunts and uncles.

A family service will be held at Zion Lutheran Church on Saturday, February 20, with Pastor Mark Peters officiating. A Celebration of Life and burial services are being planned for a later date.

Arrangements are with Green-Larsen Mortuary Inc. You are invited to see additional photos and information at their online website.

Please visit Linda's CaringBridge site.

<https://www.caringbridge.org/public/lindamerrill2>

In lieu of flowers, the family requests that you might consider gifting those organizations that were close to Linda's life and heart:

- 1) Zion Lutheran Church 530 6th Street International Falls MN 56649
- 2) The Backus Community Center 900 5th St. International Falls MN 56649
- 3) Fairview Home Care and Hospice 2716 Crescent Drive, Suite 1 International Falls MN 56649

Condolences may be mailed to the family at:
917 Riverside Drive
International Falls
Minnesota 56649